



REVIEW

June
2008

FUTURE MEETINGS

17.30 for
18.00 start

Tue 15 July
White Hart Hotel

11 August
Queen's Suite
Harrogate
International
Centre

8 September
Cedar Court
Hotel

13 October
St George Hotel

10 November
Crown Hotel

8 December
Holiday Inn

Review of Chamber Meeting + News Update

STARTING & GROWING A BUSINESS

- Best Small Company of the Year Winner tells her own story of ups and downs
- After financial setbacks It's Nut Free is now supplying most major supermarkets
- Lloyds TSB highlight the 8 key fundamentals for every new business start-up
- Business Link Yorkshire now provide a wider range of support for all businesses
- Discussion highlights that Turnover is vanity, Profit is sanity but Cash is king!

HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS

- Harrogate Council offers to match local business funding for Christmas Lights!
- Harrogate International Centre display plans for new Exhibition Hall on Car Park
- North Yorkshire Police are now reconsidering the policy on community parades
- Dunlopillo Site at Pannal will be the subject of a Public Enquiry on 22nd July
- Are you happy with Royal Mail's postal delivery service around Harrogate now?

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS & NEWS

- Yorkshire Business Market 2009 confirmed for Monday 27th April at Pavilions
- Yorkshire Agricultural Society win Awards and start construction of new Centre
- Ascot House Hotel are upgraded by AA & Visit Britain to a 3 star Hotel
- Learning & Skills Council funding for New Business Generation consultancy

Future Meetings

Tuesday, 15th July at White Hart Hotel, Harrogate (# Note Tuesday meeting this month)

Harrogate Transport - Future Bus & Rail Links

with presentations by Harrogate & District Travel,
Harrogate Trains, National Express and Northern Rail

Monday, 11th August at the Queen's Suite, Harrogate International Centre

Business Networking Safari + Buffet

Chamber members only - limited capacity - pre-booking essential

Attendance FREE for one representative per company; £10 for second representative.

PROMOTING HARROGATE BUSINESS

Harrogate Chamber of Trade & Commerce, PO Box 8, Harrogate, HG2 8XB

Tel: 01423 879208 Fax: 01423 870025 E-mail: info@harrogatechamber.org Website: harrogatechamber.org

HOW TO SUCCEED STARTING & GROWING A NEW BUSINESS

It's Nut Free - Angela Russell "From Kitchen to Global!"

Angela Russell, founder of Its Nut Free, gave members of Harrogate Chamber a fascinating insight into the trials and tribulations she faced in starting up and growing, and then re-growing, her own business!

When her young daughter was found to be highly allergic to nuts Angela began baking "nut-free" cakes and snack bars in her kitchen. Now 6 years on she is supplying a range of nut-free products to most of the major supermarkets and to many schools and hospitals nationwide - with some export business on top.

However she had a very rocky ride and she highlighted the importance of keeping control of the business - and particularly the cash flow.

The commercial aspect began when Angela offered to bake cakes for her daughter's Kid's Club at the local swimming pool. The catering manager was so impressed he offered to buy supplies from Angela and supply all the swimming pools in the area.

Angela quickly realised there was a market for her product and got in touch with the Anaphylaxis Campaign (www.anaphylaxis.org.uk) who confirmed no-one else was providing such a product and also offered to promote it. So she started up with a website, selling by mail order, and continuing to supply the swimming pools via Harrogate Borough Council.

About six months in, a buyer from Asda rang after seeing some of the It's Nut Free products at one of the swimming pools and arranged a meeting. The same week she received a phone call from Ken Morrison asking her to come to see his buyers!

At this stage the cakes were being baked on regular cake trays in Angela's and a friend's ovens. So she decided to take the big step to re-mortgage her house and acquired her first 'factory' in Melmerby.

Now with customised premises and six staff working for her, the business went from strength to strength. The next move was to a converted abattoir in Boston Spa! This involved raising more finance and buying bigger and better equipment.

Around this stage Angela married her partner Stewart and decided to have a baby. This resulted in the bank manager panicking and felt the company needed a team of directors used to dealing with major multiples and to take the business forward.

This turned out to be bad advice, with the Managing Director, Financial Director and investors taking too much control away from Angela and within 18 months the company went into administration. Angela lost everything and her only option was to bid to try and buy the company back. This was very difficult as she had invested everything into the company, but with legal help she managed to succeed by 23rd October 2006, followed on 26th October 2006 with her first Sainsbury's order! From then on orders have been rolling from nearly all of the supermarkets and the NHS.

The landlord had allowed Angela to keep the abattoir on, but it was now too small to keep up with the level of orders, and she was also utilising a converted stable in Harrogate for the packing. This temporary arrangement enabled the company to continue and gather enough money together to purchase a factory in Northallerton, which has plenty of space for expansion and much more efficient machinery and bagging equipment.

The only supermarket Angela does not supply is Tesco - but she has a meeting with them next week!! By the time this goes to press, she hopes all of the supermarkets are 'in the bag'!

In 2008, added to the supermarkets and two NHS contracts, It's Nut Free supply many schools and universities in the UK and have recently begun supplying to Mexico and Australia. Their Refrigerator Cake won a Gold Award given by the Guild of Fine Foods and is on the shelves in Harrods.

It's Nut Free won the Best Small Company Award, sponsored by Harrogate Chamber, in the 2007 Ackrill Media Group Business Awards.

To find out more about It's Nut Free contact:
Angela Russell, It's Nut Free, Tel: 01609 775660
E: angie@itsnutfree.com Web: www.itsnutfree.com

Lloyds TSB Commercial - Richard Strike

Richard Strike, Senior Business Development Manager for Lloyds TSB in the North, who is based at the bank's office in Harrogate, explained his role within Lloyds TSB is to introduce new business to the bank via his contacts within the local business community. He is part of a small team of experienced business managers who are dedicated to assisting all types of businesses from start ups to multi million pound turnover companies in obtaining the correct and most appropriate financial support they need.

Richard said there are 8 key fundamentals every new business needs to cover before starting up in business:

Who are you and what is your experience in the business you are entering?

What is your USP (unique selling point)?

Who are your customers - How will they know you?

How much will you charge?

Who is the competition?

What is your breakeven figure?

Is the amount of money you need enough?

Risk Management or What if??

The last question is the most difficult to ask yourself and even more difficult to answer. Whether you are just setting up in business or have 20 years under your belt there are inherent risks in being self employed from the loss of a key customer, member of staff or outside risks in respect of the wider economy. Many of these risks can be protected against and you should be undertaking risk assessments for the business on a daily basis.

The key to avoiding most of the pitfalls in business is the relationships you maintain with your clients, staff, suppliers but most importantly with the professional advisers you surround yourself with - **your Bank Manager, Accountant and Solicitor**. These three people can give you so much more than just advice on

the questions you know you need to ask but more importantly answer the questions you didn't know needed asking.

Your bank manager will have a wealth of knowledge on your sector based upon your competitors' performance, economic forecasts from its industry experts etc. There are literally dozens of funding solutions for businesses from standard overdraft funding, term lending, HP through to factoring and ID. Some are more appropriate than others and your bank manager is the best person to explore the choices with you.

Richard summed up for those who are setting up in business to plan and prepare your business plan as if your life depended on it, don't put it in a drawer when you have done it, but use it, review it and amend it going forward. Don't assume that bad things won't happen and insure against the risks associated with your particular business.

Thinking about setting up, expanding or need a recommendation for any professionals in the area contact:

Richard Strike, Senior Business Development Manager, Lloyds TSB Tel: 07793 581180

E-mail: Richard.strike@lloydstsb.co.uk

Website: www.lloydstsb.com/business

Business Link Yorkshire

Dawn Whiteley, Head of New Enterprise at Business Link Yorkshire outlined the new services the organisation would be offering both start-ups, growing and established businesses.

On 1 April 2008 Business Link Yorkshire became the provider of Business Link services to businesses, and to anyone thinking of starting a business, across the whole of Yorkshire and the Humber.

They provide access to impartial advice and expertise to solve business problems, meet business needs and create opportunities for businesses across Yorkshire and the Humber.

They are building upon the strengths of the Business Link service that has been provided sub-regionally in the past, and their new service provides:

- A strong, single Business Link brand – impartial, independent and objective
- A new regional Gateway to business support
- New regional information services
- An exciting new region-wide service for start-up businesses
- A new regional website - www.businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk
- Regional consistency of service, with delivery remaining local to customers
- Stronger collaboration with partners and stakeholders
- Wider brokerage to support providers, with purchasing decisions driven by the customer

Business Link Yorkshire work in partnership with the full range of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure that their services are fully integrated with other local services and that their

activities are targeted to meet local and regional economic priorities.

Their services are available locally in all parts of Yorkshire and the Humber, and can be accessed in a number of ways to best suit the customer – including over the phone, through their website, through their extensive events and seminar programme, or where appropriate via a one to one meeting with a business adviser.

To find out more call the **Business Link Yorkshire Customer Information Centre on 08456 048 048** or visit their website www.businesslinkyorkshire.co.uk

QUESTIONS

Garry Fry of Yorkshire Events Photography, asked Angela Russell to amplify on what actually caused the company to go into Administration?

Angela replied that at the time she was pregnant and having been offered someone to help out when she was working 60 to 80 hours a week, it appeared to be a great opportunity for her to spend some more time at home, with four children to look after.

In reality there is a big difference between a professional managing director, expecting a salary, six weeks holiday, 9-5 working, and an entrepreneur who will work as and when required and not necessarily draw a large salary. The timing for It's Nut Free was not right and it left Angela with no control.

Brian Dunsby asked how she lost control of the shares.

Angela replied that to start with the incoming Managing Director took a small percentage of the shares for a small investment. He in turn brought in a Financial Director, who decided larger premises were required and brought in an outside investor, meaning Angela's shares were reduced even more, therefore, her control was lost.

Jane Fowler of Munro Connections Ltd asked what advice they would give to a start-up company in the current economic climate, in terms of raising finance.

Dawn Whiteley recommended start-ups to plan properly, make sure you thoroughly understand what it will cost to set up, know where your customers are, will they be affected by the current climate, if they are, no doubt you will be. The longer you take to plan, the much more chance of success you have.

Richard Strike agreed with Dawn's advice and added that your business plan will probably tell you if your idea will be a success. Richard cautioned people to speak to their Accountant, who can offer impartial advice on your plan.

Angela Russell said "Cash is King" - if you can't afford it, don't buy it. Don't pay anybody until you absolutely have to! Small businesses are always the last to be paid.

Brian Dunsby concluded with a catch phrase from his days as a business adviser, "**Turnover is Vanity, Profit is Sanity but Cash is King**". His advice to a new business in the current economic climate would be to know your market. Thorough market research provides the foundation for your business.

Stuart Pearson of The Trinity Foundation asked if any constraints were being placed on the banks following the huge losses worldwide.

Richard Strike confirmed that the banks' credit policy currently made it very difficult to get high risk loans through, but it is still very easy for good business people with sound proposals to raise finance.

HARROGATE DISTRICT NEWS

Harrogate Borough Council

President, Robert Whiteley, together with Vice Presidents, Mark Lancaster, David Horth and Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby, recently had a very positive and productive meeting with senior Harrogate Borough Council Officers which reflected the improved working relationship between the two organisations. This should be of benefit to the business community as a whole.

Several important issues were raised and steps forward were reported including the Council allowing temporary signage to be erected for key events and new permanent signs for key venues have been erected.

One very positive announcement was the Council have agreed to provide funding of £7,500 towards the Christmas Lights if the business community will raise £7,500 to match. This will realise a total of £15,000 which is needed to operate the current level of Christmas Lights. Harrogate Chamber's Management Group have already agreed to donate £1,000 which leaves just £6,500 to be raised from local businesses.

As the Soroptimists have now stepped down from running the campaign, a renewed appeal is being made for someone to administer the funds, which should now be an easier option following the commitment from Harrogate Borough Council and the Chamber.

Would any Members who have connections with organisations such as Round Table, Lions, Rotary, etc. please contact the Chamber Secretariat? Any similar organisations that regularly raise funds for a good cause could use the Christmas Lights Campaign as a vehicle to raise money not only for the lights, but for the good causes they already support.

Harrogate International Centre

The planning application for major alterations to the Harrogate International Centre is now at the pre-consultation stage. Phase 1 will be the building of a **new exhibition hall** and multi-storey vehicle park on the site of the Holiday Inn car park, which will be linked to the existing halls. This will be followed by demolishing Hall A and building new Halls above Halls B and C.

It was disappointing when the news emerged that the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) were pulling their conference out of Harrogate in 2009 and move it to Manchester. Following being contacted by the Press for comments, Brian Dunsby got in touch with senior officers at CIPD to ascertain why they had made this decision. Their response was that the event had outgrown Harrogate's infrastructure. They had no problems with HIC facilities and service, but the transport links and number and quality of hotels were not adequate for such a large international conference.

Brian stressed the importance of these aspects being given attention as a matter of urgency and the Chamber will continue to lobby on the town's behalf.

It should be added that HIC are confident this gap in the conference calendar will soon be filled, but the loss of a long-standing event is a knock to the town's reputation.

North Yorkshire Police Parade Policy

Following publication in last month's REVIEW of the Chamber's letter to the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police (NYP), objecting to the change in policy for policing community events and parades, we have received an encouraging reply on behalf of the Chief Constable, as follows:

"Following the Harrogate Borough scrutiny committee the Chief Constable and the Chair of the Police Authority have agreed to revisit the current events policy.

As you may be aware North Yorkshire Police are one of many forces implementing the ACPO policy for events and cost recovery procedures. In addition, forces are adhering to and encouraging the wider understanding of government publications on event safety to event organisers.

Since the announcement of the revisit I have researched the implementation of these policies within other forces, obtained further legal opinion on police powers and how they are interpreted across other police forces. My findings will be presented to the Chief Constable and the Police Authority in July 2008. It is hoped that in the interim ACPO will publish further guidance and clarity on policing of events.

NYP are fully aware of the impact this policy has upon our communities. We will seek to develop clear working procedures with our partners to provide a robust but clear joint policy in relation to managing events across North Yorkshire.

NYP continues to find a suitable solution whilst balancing the legislative, Government policy and ACPO guidance in serving our local communities and to allow local events to be safe and supported by their local police."

*Sup. Ali Higgins
Head of Operations and Contingency Planning*

The local campaign, led by Councillor Philip Broadbank and Councillor Caroline Bayliss, with support from this Chamber, has led to the revisiting of the policy by NYP.

We hope to have some good news to announce at the July or August meetings.

Dunlopillo Site News

After the original proposals for redevelopment of the Dunlopillo Site at Pannal were rejected, the developers lodged an appeal. The resulting public inquiry will be at 10.00 am on 22nd July 2008 at the Council Offices.

Members who have any interest or detailed knowledge of this planning application should contact Brian Dunsby at chiefexec@harrogatechamber.org and he can raise objections on your behalf and keep you advised of the progress.

Continuing Postal Service Problems

Members were asked if they were still experiencing problems with the delivery of their business mail, resulting in several disgruntled comments.

Brian Dunsby had recently met with Judith Donovan, Chair of PostWatch North, the consumer watchdog set up by the Government when the Post Office Consultative Committees were closed. She said in her experience, Harrogate was suffering more than other parts of the County - and all members present agreed!!

However, regrettably they won't be able to do anything about it because the Government is closing down all PostWatches and dismissing the staff. The responsibility will be transferred to one of the regulation type bodies.

On a positive note, Brian recently received a phone call from a well-known TV programme that had picked up Harrogate's Royal Mail problems from press coverage and wondered if we would like to talk about it on national television. **Members are, therefore, asked to submit specific examples of what problems the delay in receiving mail causes to local businesses.**

Winter Maintenance Issues?

A review of Winter Maintenance Project by North Yorkshire County Council was highlighted at a recent Area Committee Meeting. **Members with issues over gritting, de-icing, snow clearance, etc.**, should get in touch with the Chamber Secretariat and we can pass your comments on to the Council.

YORKSHIRE BUSINESS MARKET 27th APRIL 2009

Stuart Pearson announced that an early start would be made in marketing the 2009 Yorkshire Business Market in order to capitalise on this year's success.

A date of 27th April 2009 has been agreed with opening hours of 12.00-18.00, responding to the suggestions and very positive feedback received from most exhibitors.

Stuart was pleased to say that Leeds Chamber has agreed to take an active part in supporting the event, which was well attended by their members this year.

Brian Dunsby drew attention to the excellent coverage in Ackrill's Business Pink which promoted the success of this year's Yorkshire Business Market.

Put the 27th April into your 2009 diary and drop an e-mail to the Secretariat if you wish to exhibit in 2009, so we can ensure you are sent advance information and a booking form as soon as it is available.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Leeds Chamber Affiliation

President, Robert Whiteley, Vice-President, Stuart Pearson and Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby recently met with the Leeds Chamber's Executive Director, Gary Williamson and Membership Liaison Manager, Mark Goldstone to review the benefits of Harrogate Chamber's affiliate membership of Leeds Chamber.

It was agreed to continue the current arrangements and to increase promotion of the Yorkshire Business Market.

Leeds Chamber is keen to ensure our members receive Leeds Business Update (LBU) by post. Members who do not receive a copy please let us know by e-mail. If you do get it and you don't like it also let us know! The magazine is published and despatched bi-monthly.

Members should also receive Leeds Chamber's 'E-zine' by e-mail every fortnight. Again, your views on this would be appreciated and confirmation you do receive it.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Award for Yorkshire Agricultural Society

The Yorkshire Agricultural Society has been awarded the Green Business of the Year Award at the Yorkshire Rural Awards held at Pavilions of Harrogate. The Society plans to continue to improve its environmental and sustainable credentials with future projects including a **new Regional Agricultural Centre** incorporating local materials and energy saving systems and a new farm shop on the Great Yorkshire Showground site.

Also on the Showground site, Yorkshire Event Centre Ltd who runs the Yorkshire Event Centre and Pavilions of Harrogate, were runners up in the finals of the Insider Business Tourism Awards.

Websites: www.yas.co.uk and www.eventcentre.co.uk

Music on a Summer's Evening

On Sunday, 17th August an event in aid of Saint Michael's Hospice is being held at and sponsored by Pavilions of Harrogate with Kings Catering providing and sponsoring a sumptuous dinner. Entertainment will be provided by Opera North and a few tables still remain with tickets at £45. Tel: 01423 544544.

A sponsor for the Drinks Reception is being sought if any members wish to offer their support to Patsy King on H 526401 E; kingscateringcompany@btinternet.com

Prestige Re-location, re-location, re-location!

If you caught the Channel 4 programme, 'Location, Location, Location' on Wednesday, 11th June, you might not have realised Fiona Gilbert of Prestige Relocation was involved in helping Phil Spencer and Kirstie Alsopp to source properties to shortlist and provide local background in North Yorkshire. In the programme Kirstie and Phil found properties for two couples wanting to relocate to the Thirsk and York area.

Prestige Relocation sources residential and commercial property for a range of private and corporate clients and can be contacted on 01423 879988 or via the website, www.prestigerelocation.com.

Congratulations to Jo at Catalyst Coaching

Many congratulations to Jo Murphy, Director of Catalyst Coaching, who has joined one of only a handful of professional coaches to be qualified and accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). Jo is now the very proud owner of a Level 7 Diploma in Executive Coaching and Leadership Mentoring.

Jo was also excited about a trip to the House of Commons to take part in a debate about Innovation.

To find out more about Catalyst Coaching visit www.catalyst-pm.co.uk

Ascot House Hotel gains a Star!

The AA and Visit Britain have awarded the Ascot House Hotel an extra star making them a Three Star Hotel. Visit Britain said, "Standards of service and hospitality were found to be excellent... The hotel has been very well maintained..." They also awarded them their Silver Award, for hotels "achieving the highest standards in their classification".

In August, the Johnson family celebrates its 20th Anniversary "in charge" at the Ascot House. In 1988, the hotel had 27 bedrooms, 5 of which were en suite. After plenty of plumbing and several circuits with paint and wallpaper, they now have 18 en suite, well-equipped and beautifully maintained bedrooms.

More details at www.ascotthouse.com Tel: H. 531005.

Charity Golf Teams Wanted

The Friends of Harrogate Homeless Project are looking for teams to compete in a Charity Golf Day on Thursday, 26th June at Flaxby Park Golf Club, Knaresborough from 10.00 to 14.00. The event is open to men and women in teams of four with prizes for best players, nearest to pin and longest drive. An Aussie barbecue will follow with presentations of trophies and prizes.

Members interest in supporting this event please contact Elaine Harrison on 01423 864571 or e-mail Elaine@friendsofhhp.co.uk

Berwins Debt Recovery Seminar

Berwins Solicitors are holding a Debt Recovery Seminar - "It's our Money - How do we get paid?" on 19th and 24th June. For further details to or book contact Luke Barton on 01423 542779 or LukeBarton@berwin.co.uk

DSC - Free Breakfast Seminars

DSC's next dates for free breakfast seminars are Wednesday 18th and Friday 20th June, White Hart Hotel, Harrogate 8.00 am -10.00 am, when Simon Pease will be presenting "How to create a bright financial future".

Call Jenny Purdy on 01423 560547 or email j.purdy@dscga.com to book your place.

Corporate Hospitality opportunities at 150th Great Yorkshire Show

Opportunities are still available for you to take advantage of corporate hospitality to entertain your clients at the Great Yorkshire Show, being held on 8, 9, 10 July 2008. For details contact Janet Fox on 01423 546 228 or e-mail janetf@yas.co.uk

Buy your Visitor tickets in advance to save money - visit www.greatyorkshireshow.com for full details.

CHM Sales and Marketing Consultants

CHM specialises in New Business Generation and help clients find new customers and sell to them. A small amount of funding has been made available from the LSC that will allow them to take on 10 new clients in Harrogate. The funding will pay for two half day sessions for each client at their premises. In each session CHM work to the client's agenda. As they are paid by the LSC, there is no cost to the client. All businesses are

eligible as long as they have more than 2 employees including the owner/director and are based in Yorkshire.

To apply to meet the funding broker at The Crown Hotel in Harrogate on Tuesday 24th June - contact Tim Leleux and he will arrange a 10 minute time slot. Tel: 01756 770336 e-mail tim@coachhouse.co.uk

FUTURE MEETINGS

15th July Meeting - Harrogate Transport

PLEASE NOTE: The next meeting will be held a day later than originally published, on **TUESDAY, 15th JULY**. The venue and timing remain the same at the White Hart Hotel on Cold Bath Road from 17.30.

The topic is "**Harrogate Transport - Future Bus and Rail Links**" with the following speakers:

- David Alexander, Managing Director Harrogate & District Travel (TRANSDEV)
- Mark Leving, Managing Director, Hull Trains and Harrogate Trains
- Alan Hyde, Head of Communications, National Express East Coast
- Richard Allan, Head of Communications, Northern Rail

We also expect a representative from the developers of the Harrogate Interchange to attend who will give a brief update as to where the proposed redevelopment of the Bus Station and Railway Station has now reached.

11th August Meeting - Safari

The August meeting is a Business Networking Safari and for the first time a meeting will be held in the Queen's Suite at Harrogate International Centre.

Due to high demand at the last Safari places are limited to one representative per Company for this event. A second representative can attend for a charge of £10, but both must remain as a pair throughout the evening.

To guarantee a place for your company at this popular event, send an e-mail to info@harrogatechamber.org.

FOCUS GROUPS

Promoting Harrogate

New 'Harrogate & the Yorkshire Dales - Great Days Out in 2008' is available at the Tourist Information Centre, including details of local events and visitor attractions.

Harrogate Chamber is in negotiations with Destination Harrogate and Harrogate International Centre with a view to the Chamber taking on the compilation of a new Harrogate Visitor Map. The ultimate aim is for every hotel to give a map to each of their visitors.

The current plan is for a detailed street map of the town centre on one side including shops, restaurants, hotels, guest houses, taxi operators, etc with spotting on the map plus brief contact details around the edge. The reverse of the map would include a smaller scale map incorporating Harewood House, Ripley Castle, Harlow Carr Gardens, Ripley House and Rudding Park, etc. to embrace the Harrogate District tourism attractions and provide an opportunity for relevant links on the map.

Traffic & Transport

Harrogate - London Rail Link

Good news on the rail front, First Harrogate Trains is hoping to be running 8 direct trains a day between **Harrogate and London** from Summer 2009. This new service is being proposed by Hull Trains, the company who runs First TransPennine Express and First Great Western amongst others.

Their proposals include stops at Starbeck and Knaresborough, a park and ride facility at Cattal and an innovative bus link with Wetherby. Brian Dunsby recently had a meeting with Mark Leving, Managing Director of Hull Trains and Harrogate Trains who said: *"The proposals would ensure that Harrogate, as a leading UK conference destination, is given the reliable, frequent and efficient transport links it deserves. Over the coming months we will be working with partners, the public and local businesses from the town and surrounding villages to better understand the needs of our commuters. Hull Trains have developed a blueprint for success gaining consistently high performance scores that we hope to translate to Harrogate Trains."*

Harrogate Chamber is strongly supporting this initiative. Members can do so personally by writing to the Office of Rail Regulation headed 'Support for Harrogate Trains' by 25th June 2008 at the latest:-

TO: Brian Hopkinson, Track Access Manager
Office of Rail Regulation, One Kemble Street, London, WC2B 4AN. For details see : www.harrogate trains.co.uk

Town Centre Traffic

Chief Executive, Brian Dunsby, said Chamber Officers would be attending a meeting with the Council's Highways Department to look at alternative options for reducing traffic congestion in the town centre.

The Chamber has drawn together representatives from several companies and relevant organisations to take part in the meeting, including Harrogate & District Travel, Harrogate Taxi Association, Royal Mail, and the Driving Instructors' Association.

Leeds Bradford Airport Customer Service

A meeting has also been arranged with Leeds Bradford International Airport to address several issues of inadequate customer care including drop-off and pick-up points with weather protection and access for VIPs and disabled passengers to the front of the airport. Other issues include hand baggage limit and fast track access.

One recent example was a disabled passenger having to wait in the car park until a wheelchair was brought to take them to the airport terminal building in pouring rain. Please send any further examples to the Secretariat.

Harrogate Cycle Routes

Harrogate Borough Council has published the "Harrogate & Knaresborough Cycle Map 2008/09" to complement the many new blue Cycle Route signs that have been erected around the town.

Find out more at www.harrogate.gov.uk/cycling and www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment/travelwise

The Harrogate Chamber Management Group have agreed to make £5,000 available for this project if other parties make their contribution to facilitate the publication of this map in 2009. The ultimate aim is for 250,000 copies to be printed for circulation to business and leisure visitors via Hotels and Guest Houses, etc.

Members with experience of publishing such maps, or with any views or ideas on the best content and layout, please contact the Chamber Secretariat.

Town Centre Improvements

Past President, Granville Simpson, reported that it was 4 years since initiating proposals for improved town centre signage with Harrogate Borough Council. Pedestrian signs to direct visitors from the Bus and Railway Stations to the Conference Centre had been agreed on, but when the signs are to be erected is still not known.

President, Robert Whiteley, confirmed this had been raised at the recent meeting with Council Officers, and it appeared there had been a breakdown in communication between two Council Departments. It was hoped this had now been overcome and that action would be imminently forthcoming.

Business Waste & Recycling

Harrogate Chamber has been contacted regarding the 'Plastic Bag Free Harrogate' campaign and we ask any members interested to get in touch with the Secretariat.

Granville Simpson of The Rocking Horse said he was already finding many of his customers declined to take plastic bags with their purchase.

SCAMS & SPAMS

Hallmark E-Card warning

There has been a recent increase in receipt of E-Cards. These are highly suspicious and would recommend members delete these if they receive an e-mail notification.

Building Improvement Scam

North Yorkshire Police have warned about only using reputable companies for building improvements and maintenance following a lady being quoted £75 for repairs to a roof tile, only to have the workman refuse to leave until she had paid £500. The workman was driving a grey van with 'R2G Roofing' on the side.

Booklet and Directory Scams

We would like to send out an alert about two recurring scams of being requested to advertise - one in a booklet purporting to be on drug awareness for children and one promoting web-based on-line Business Directories.

Our recommendation is always ask for samples of the publications before agreeing to advertise and be fully aware of the risks involved in paying for these up front.

Creating Safer Communities

Any Chamber Members interested in business crime reduction may be interested in an opportunity to become involved with the Police on the Creating Safer Communities in Harrogate Partnership. Please contact the Secretariat to put your name forward.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Business Link Yorkshire opportunities for Business Advisers

Business Link Yorkshire have sub-contracted a project to Leeds Chamber, in conjunction with Harrogate Chamber, to identify members in the Advisory Support/Counselling/Mentoring sector North Yorkshire, who are willing and able to help businesses in their first year or two of trading. Business Link will pay for half a day or one day's help on specified projects.

Members who have not already contacted the Secretariat please do so and we can pass your name on to Business Link Yorkshire

Institute of Directors' Events

A Business Breakfast is being held at The Academy in Harrogate on Wednesday, 2nd July from 08.00 to 10.00 on "People Issues Facing Yorkshire Businesses" with Tim Holden, Managing Director of Fluid Consulting.

The IoD are also holding a Yorkshire Day Celebration Lunch at York Racecourse on Friday, 1st August from 12.00 to 15.00 with all proceeds going to the NSPCC.

For more details or to book on either of these two events contact Susanne Foxley on 0113 243 0152 or visit www.iod.com and follow the Events link.

NEW MEMBERS

Harrogate Independent Financial Services Ltd

(Independent Financial Advisers)

Claire Stockwell, Acting Business Manager

51-53 East Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5LQ

Tel: 01423 705020 **Fax:** 01423 817321

E-mail: claire@hifsl.co.uk

Web site: www.hifsl.co.uk

Yorkshire Events Photography

(Photographic/Photography)

Garry Fry, Proprietor

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THANKS TO MAJESTIC HOTEL

Many thanks to Regional Manager, Vince Johnson, General Manager, Stuart Tilt; Senior Event Manager, Catherine Barker and the staff at the Barceló Harrogate Majestic Hotel for hosting the meeting in such grand surroundings.

For more information on the Majestic Hotel and their extensive facilities for a variety of functions go to: www.barcelo-hotels.co.uk or contact Catherine Barker, Senior Event Manager Tel: 01423 700306
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BUSINESS BRIEFINGS

Flexible working extension nightmare for small businesses

Plans to extend the right to request flexible working could be a nightmare for small business owners, according to the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). The extensions, announced by the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) last week, now mean that parents of children aged up to 16 can request the right to work flexibly.

The FSB is arguing that the very size of small businesses means that it is difficult and more costly for them to cope with employment red tape. However, BERR's review of flexible working found that small business are more likely than larger businesses to accept flexible working requests.

There is more on this story at:

<http://www.fsb.org.uk/news.asp?REC=4610>

Read BERR's press release on the subject at:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=367522&NewsAreaID=2>

Health and safety responsibility starts from top, says HSE

The Chair of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has said that health and safety is essential to business success. Speaking at a conference, Judith Hackitt said that leaders at the top of organisations were responsible for ensuring a 'real and lasting health and safety culture'.

Ms Hackitt highlighted actions that all businesses should take in order to help embed health and safety culture in the workplace. One point was that managers should not rely on reports to tell them what they need to know - they should find out for themselves and check the realities of health and safety working practices deployed in their businesses.

Read more on this story at:

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=367340&NewsAreaID=2>

Food businesses can gain from Fair Trade phenomenon

Food businesses have the opportunity to win new customers if they make the switch to fairly traded produce, it's been claimed. A survey by researchers TNS CAPI OmniBus found that the percentage of consumers who buy Fair Trade products regularly had risen, indicating that the fair trade movement is more enduring than previously thought. The Fairtrade Foundation said it was surprised by the survey's findings and the main force behind the take-up has been the interest shown at grassroots levels.

There is more on this story at:

<http://www.foodanddrinkeurope.com/news/printNewsBis.asp?id=85231>

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